

# The Hereford *Insurgent* **FREE**

Herefordshire's only working class newspaper

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Issue 1 - Jan/Feb 2004

## GOOD RIDDANCE!

John Haycock, fascist and Bromyard town councillor has resigned!

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## YOBBOY ON THE BEAT

Dealing with 'anti-social' crime in the community

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# KICK OUT THE COUNCIL

**TIME TO  
ORGANISE AS TAX  
TO RISE AGAIN**

It's that time of year again when we all look back at our finances and realise that we overspent buying other people presents and such like over christmas and tell ourselves, yet again, that we can't let it happen again next year. Similarly, it is also the time of year that the Council look over their finances and realise how much they're in debt. But that's where the similarities end.

Unlike other people, the Council have run up their debts - not by spending *their* money on other people - but by spending *our* money on pay rises for the top brass and other pointless things. Pointless things like spending £900 a year to rent one drill from Jarvis, the private company whom they sold it to in the first place (who also now manage many of the Council's services after they were privatised last year). And it is us that suffers the effects of their lavish spending.

This year, like many others, we will no doubt see our council tax rise yet again. Last year it was raised by around 14%, well over inflation.

And this year could be around the same. Why do we take it? Year upon year having our taxes raised because *they* over spend, we have to take the burden. And what do we see for it? Better schools? Improved public services such as libraries and buses? Better financial help for the unemployed? No. All we see is a silver lining for the rich developers to bring their profit-before-people businesses into the city. We're sure that if the Queen moved to Hereford tomorrow we'd see a vast improvement in services and the city. But for 50 000+ 'proles'? Why bother!

### In the public interest?

So why would they raise the taxes yet again? Well, yet again there has been a huge cut in funding from central government which coincidentally tallies very nicely with the overspend on the Iraq war. Surely we wouldn't be made to pay for their bloodbath?! And then there's the more local issue of having to find an extra £3 million to finance the Rotherwas Access Road which will only serve the interests of busi-



Demonstrations that killed the Council Tax's precursor - the Poll Tax

nesses at Rotherwas, and will not do anything to reduce road congestion in the city. Plus any pay rises or 'business trips' the Council bosses decide to give themselves. Could these be the reasons for possible rises in taxes?!

It's time we organised against this charade and showed the Council whose really boss. Campaigns of non-payment, protests and riots - like we saw against the much hated Poll Tax - will show the Council we won't take it lying down.

## Who are we?

The Hereford Insurgent has been produced by the Hereford branch of the Anarchist Federation.



The Anarchist Federation is an organisation of class struggle anarchists

(based in Britain and Ireland, but with many contacts overseas) which aims to abolish Capitalism and all oppression to create a free and equal society. This is **Anarchist Communism**.

We see today's society as being divided into two main opposing classes: the **ruling class** which controls all the power and wealth, and the **working class** which the rulers exploit to maintain this. By racism, sexism and other forms of oppression, as well as war and environmental destruction the rulers weaken and divide us. Only the **direct action** of working class people can defeat these attacks and ultimately overthrow capitalism.

As the capitalist system rules the whole world it's destruction must be complete and world wide. We reject attempts to reform it such as working through parliament and national liberation movements (like the IRA) as they fail to challenge capitalism itself. Unions also work as a part of the capitalist system, so although workers struggle within them, they will be unable to bring about capitalism's destruction unless they go beyond these limits.

**Organisation** is vital if we're to beat the bosses, so we work for a united anarchist movement and are affiliated to the International of Anarchist Federations. The Anarchist Federation has members across Britain and Ireland fighting for the kind of world outlined above. Contact us at:

**Anarchist Federation (Hereford),**  
PO Box 7, Pontypool, Gwent,  
NP4 8YB  
Visit: [www.afed.org.uk](http://www.afed.org.uk)  
Email: [hereford@afed.cjb.net](mailto:hereford@afed.cjb.net)

***For working class self  
organisation and  
social revolution***

## Light at the end of the tunnel with...

# COMMUNITY RESISTANCE

Most of us will agree that the way we live our lives is not exactly what you'd call 'perfect'. You'd be hard pressed to find a tenant on a housing estate in Hereford who is happy with every aspect of his or her life. Similarly with people in privately owned or rented homes. Fact is, that life as it stands is, on the whole, shit. That is unless you're one of those rich people whose only problem is what to spend all your money on.

Working class people are constantly up against it - in a permanent state of defence and collective depression - faced with rising council taxes; cuts in services; crap wages and bosses blatantly breaking the laws at work. A never ending list of people in debt up to their eye balls; No say in what's going on in our communities or how our life's mapped out; the constant cycle of work, rest, sleep, work, rest, sleep to meet the bills instead of living our lives for ourselves. And our only choice in politics is in what Mickey Mouse politician will govern our lives for us. They pit the ethnic minorities against the 'whites' in some phoney 'race war', constantly isolating the working class to make us weak and limit our chances of attack. It's divide and rule and we let it happen.

It is in the face of this that the Anarchist Federation push for working class community resistance groups to fight back and to unite against the forces that create this state of affairs - State and capitalism.

The majority of local residents groups or community associations have been set up by or heavily involve the Herefordshire Council as an equal. Illegitimate community nobodies such as vicars, police and other 'community leaders' (with whom our class has nothing in common) are often found here and are a burden to progress.

We've seen in recent times that there is potential for residents groups to collectively fight back. It was not too long ago that the Redhill Residents Association organised a road blockade to protest against the cuts in bus services in the area. Informally organised Tupsley residents also organised against unwanted buses in their area.

It is in this context that we encourage all residents of Hereford to set up their own independent working class resistance groups to fight back. For too long we have been in a state of defence and it's time to show that we're a force to be reckoned with.

## I'M SO BORED WITH THE JSA

A rant from Marc £43.25. That's what I have to live on while I'm unemployed. This is what is supposed to get me through the week.

There's a negative attitude from society for being on the dole. As though we shouldn't be. As though while we're unemployed, looking for a job, we don't need any money and shouldn't get any even if we needed it. As though we like being on the dole and poor, and that it's our fault we're unemployed. It's not like that.

Being unemployed is tough. You don't find the job you're looking for 'just like that'. It can take

months of searching, months of rejections from potential employers. Months of poverty benefits. £43.50 is not a lot to live on, you know. Try it. Think of all the things you need (not want) to buy in a week. It's hard. There's travel, food and drink, occasional clothing, bills. And then there's debts you might have. I, personally, have £100 worth of debts I have to slowly pay back, but fast enough to keep the debt collectors off my back. And then there's hassle from the Job Centre. The threat of being shifted onto the New Deal if you don't find a job after 6 months. And all this with no means of re-

sistance.

In employment there are unions (for all they're worth) as a means of defending rights already gained and fighting for others yet to be won. It provides help and a means of meeting people also interested in defending their lot. No such luck with unemployment or the dole, I'm afraid. Resistance groups are a necessary means to fight back and they're something that the unemployed themselves need to create.

Although not local, the Nottingham Claimants Action homepage can be of much help to JSA claimants. [www.geocities.com/ncajsa](http://www.geocities.com/ncajsa)

## Revolution... by the book

Publications available from the Anarchist Federation (Hereford). Prices include postage:

**Beyond Resistance - a revolutionary manifesto:** The AF's in-depth analysis of the capitalist world in crisis, suggestions about what the alternative anarchist communist society could be like, and evaluation of social and organisational forces which play a part in the revolutionary process. £2.

**Anarchism - As we see it:** a very popular pamphlet describing the basic ideas of anarchist communism in an easy to read form. £1.

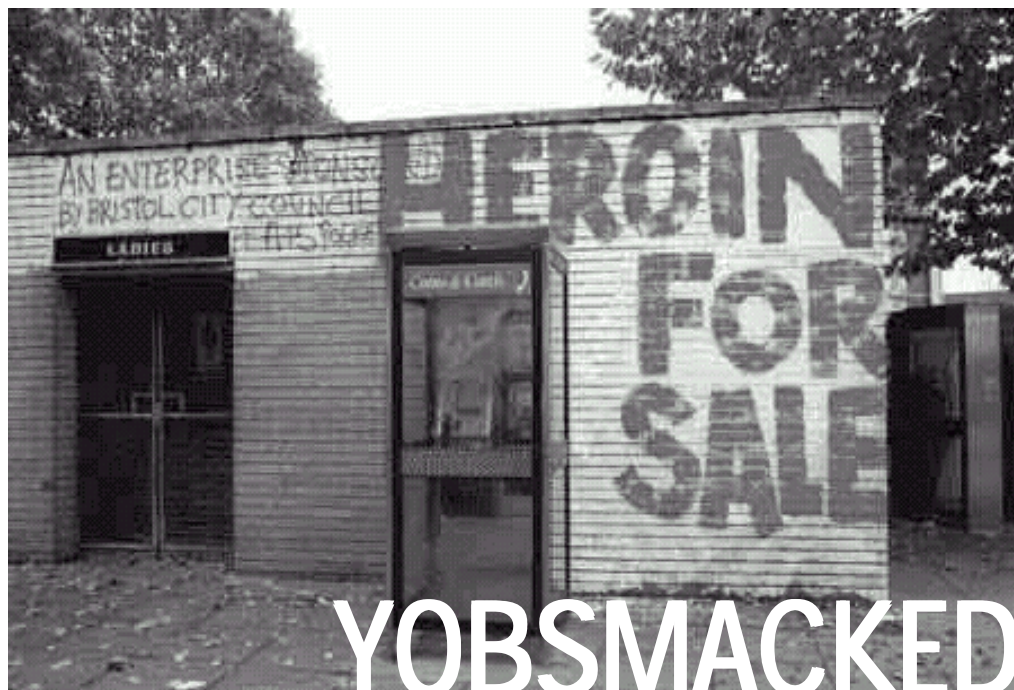
**Basic Bakunin:** this revised edition outlines the ideas of one of the 19th century founders of class struggle anarchism. £1.

**Work:** why work is so terrible and why it must be destroyed before it destroys us. £1

**Organise! - the magazine of the Anarchist Federation:** The latest issue contains articles on anti-war action in Ireland and the North East; Trade Unionism; Kropotkin and the Paris Commune; Punk rock; Class struggle in the new economy. £1.50

Cheques made payable to 'AF'. Send to: AF - Hereford, c/o PO Box 7, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 8YB





# YOB SMACKED

During late October 2003, without the help of apathetic police, archaic laws, or an out-of-touch government, the people of Greater Leys estate in Oxford did something for themselves. They decided they'd had just about enough of teenagers terrorising their neighborhood and issued an 'eviction notice' to the gang in the local park where they hang out.

The gang had taken control of the park, which people have to cross to get to the only local shop, and their threats and intimidation were escalating - one youngster was smashed in the face with a sawn-off pool cue, another slashed with a knife. One mother who turned to the cops after both her sons were attacked was told there was nothing they could do. She is now living in fear of reprisals after one of the ringleaders threatened to burn her house down.

Another local resident, Jane Lacey, said "What we are trying to do is show them (the gang) that they're not big or clever doing this stuff - they're screwing the community and they will be despised for it. We also want the parents of the gang members to sit up and take notice before it's too late and their kids become totally beyond control."

In Manchester, anti-mugging patrols happen on an irregular basis in part of the Hulme estate. Mick from Hulme said, "There are a lot of community activists and anarchists on the estate. Residents keep in touch with an email list called 'shout'. Whenever anyone gets mugged or attacked someone sends a 'shout' out to the list. Often people then take it upon themselves to arrange a time to do an anti-mugging patrol.

It's not aggressive. Residents sit out around a fire or listen to a radio at the end of one of the streets. We tell passers by what we are doing and get a favourable response. We can't be everywhere on the estate at once, but the fact that there are people out and about seems to be very good at preventing muggers, at least for the period of the patrols. It also builds the kind of community spirit that prevents this kind of crime in the first place.

The people that have been mugged really appreciate this informal scheme as it is obvious for them that they live in an area where people do care about their neighbours. It turns around the "victim mentality" by doing something active and positive. I think the general consensus on the estate is that we'd rather do

things this way than get CCTV. But maybe that's cos we're all so dodgy!"

In the Easton area of Bristol - getting over-run with crack selling yardies - locals who are tired of waiting for police who never come have taken things into their own hands too. They 'cut off' pay phones regularly used for drug dealing and spray painted 'heroin for sale' (see above) at a place of blatant public smack dealing. One of the members of the community, Flaco, points out "This isn't about vigilantism, but about taking control back from all bogus authority - whether that authority is backed by parliament, or by a pistol in the boot of a BMW."

## Oh Behave Yourself!

So what do we do about anti-social behaviour? Introduce more laws that ultimately get used on protestors? Stalking laws were introduced to protect women but have now been used on protestors. So while it's quite obvious to some of us that more laws aren't the answer, then what is? If people are getting the crap beaten out of them while just going to the shop, or the local playground is full of needles, it really doesn't help anyone to say, "Don't worry- wait for the revolution and then everything will be alright."

The answer's not easy - community action against "anti-social behaviour" does have to be well handled and can be a magnet for thugs, vigilantes and right-wing reactionaries or people who want the police to have even more powers and more CCTV. In Easton, Bristol, the members of the community groups who came together agreed about the need for do-it-yourself action but found themselves divided on issues like installing CCTV cameras. The beating to death of Josie Dwyer, a Dublin heroin addict, by a vigilante mob, is a particularly grim example of what can go wrong.

Individually the people of Greater Leys were vulnerable to attack - but collectively, by coming together as a community, they could tell the gang "Your behaviour isn't acceptable". As communities get stronger and people get to know each other, they can tackle all sorts of issues - like why there aren't decent bus services or shops in their area. And if people from 'radical' politics are involved, local communities might just start taking their ideas seriously.

Taken from SchNEWS: [www.schnews.org.uk](http://www.schnews.org.uk)

## HIGH SPIRITS AS HAYCOCK RESIGNS

Many of us only know November as the month of long cold nights, demoralising weather and another fast approaching, debt burdened christmas. But it wasn't all doom and gloom. For anti-fascist campaigners it was the time celebration came early. Bromyard and Winslow Town Council released the long awaited news that fascist town councillor, John Haycock, had resigned.

John 'nazi no brains' Haycock had become a town councillor for Bromyard back in May 2003, by default under the banner 'Union Flag Independent - No Asylum Seekers'. The ignorant bigot famously became the first British National Party (BNP) councillor (again for Bromyard) in recent times in 2001. Unfortunately for him, he never bothered turning up for council meetings and was kicked off the board because of this.

## Celebrations

The news of Haycock's resignation was greeted with celebrations from anti-fascists around the county. A local news sheet, Rebel Bull (produced by the now defunct Herefordshire Anarchist Group), had ran a campaign against this racist nutter in every issue following his election printing both home address and telephone number, and although reasons for his resignation are unknown, this is thought to have been the cause.

What this shows is that even with a small degree of opposition, racists like this can (and must) be stopped and forced to think again before they spread their hate-filled propaganda. And working class self-organisation is where it begins.



"we don't need the bosses, they need us. If we stick together, we are strong enough to get what we want. Just think, they didn't scrap the Poll Tax because everybody quietly paid up but because people stuck together and didn't pay. Now imagine bigger. Imagine the working class as a whole sticking together. Just think of the potential power we already have. Used properly, we could sort out the bosses and all their hangers-on, once, and for all."

## ESCALATE THE CLASS WAR

## DON'T GRASS ON YOUR CLASS!

The Labour Government and, in particular, the Department for Works and Pensions are still in full flow with their nationwide campaign against what they call 'benefit cheats'.

Not designed to bring to account the huge corporations who sneakily commit real fraud and refuse to pay tax on profits, this campaign is aimed at the average Joe and Joanne you pass in the street. It's aim is to catch those who claim the State's pathetic benefits and who also are left with no other option but to do a little cash in hand work on the side to make up the money to get by from week to week. Moreover, it's aim is to get us to 'grass up' fellow members of our class to their 'hotlines'. This is exactly the same sort of spying campaign that was used by the Hitler Youth under the Nazi regime and it just shows how low New Labour will go in attacking the working class.

What this campaign really aims to do, though, is to create in-fighting within the working class to have one person grassing up another 'friend'

or 'neighbour' who are in exactly the same position. In reality all it does is ignores the fact that the real enemies are those who uphold capitalism and the Government who make decisions we all have to live by.

There is a common misconception amongst the working class that someone who is 'falsely' claiming benefits is somehow taking money away from them. Yet this is not the case. Whether your neighbour or acquaintance is claiming benefits or not, we will all still have to pay taxes. And those taxes won't go to pay for our 'devious' neighbour, they will go towards maintaining a system that is rotten to the core and to pay for the priviledges of the rich. It goes to a parasitical, waste of space and air 'Royal' family and the coffers of Bank of England where the Labour government waste it on wars in other countries in pursuit of more money and for police forces that protect the rich and powerful.

The people that commit this so called 'ben-

efit fraud' are not evil criminals, they do so simply because of need. We all know someone who is doing or has done a little work on the side and we all know this is because they cannot afford to do it any other way.

Edited from an article published in Rebel Bull - Hereford newssheet.

# CUT IT UP!

You don't need to work for the Financial Times to realise that credit card debt is getting well out of hand. Ten years ago hardly anyone had one. Now there are 91 million credit and debit cards in the UK. Two fifths of our shopping is now put on the plastic. The net result is a large portion of the population with massive credit card debt. Given the extortionate interest rates charged this is seriously bad news for us and the source of gleeful hand rubbing for the high street bankers (what's that rhyming slang for I wonder?) who are pocketing it.

We see it like this. Credit cards have been introduced not to make our lives easier, but to extract money from us. Credit card debt acts like a mini mortgage - got to keep our noses to the grindstone so as not to miss any payments. We lived without them for years, and can start doing so again. To help you on your way to liberating yourself from plastic purgatory we have our "Cut it up" campaign. The first step in taking part is as easy as you make it. Get your credit card and take a pair of scissors to it. This may seem hard at first, but believe me, the feeling of relief when its done is immense. Worried about the debt you've accrued? The most important thing is not to panic. There's plenty of free advice you can get out there, and things really might not be as bad as you think. For starters, did you know the following?

\* Credit Card debt is classified as "non-priority" debt. You can't be imprisoned for not paying non-priority debts and you are unlikely to lose your home or your essential goods.

\* It is an offence under The Administration of Justice Act 1970 (amongst others) for someone in debt to be harassed by their creditor such as a credit card company or an agent acting on their behalf.

\* Debts of under £5000 can only be heard at the small claims court. So even if you do get taken to court you can't be stung with solicitors costs if you lose.

\* Debt collectors are not the same as bailiffs. Debt collectors cannot take any action against you, apart from asking you to pay any money owed.

\* Regardless of what they say, YOU DON'T HAVE TO LET BAILIFFS IN. They are not allowed to force their way into your home unless you have let them in on a previous visit, hence the importance of never, ever letting them in.

We don't claim to be legal experts. We certainly don't claim to offer "impartial" advice either - we despise bailiffs, bankers and other creditors as much as anyone and support fair means or foul to get the better of them! Some decent, free, practical advice is available from The National debt line on 0808 808 4000. Their website is [www.nationaldebtline.co.uk](http://www.nationaldebtline.co.uk). Alternatively, you could visit the Citizens Advice Bureau in St. Peters Square.

### ***I wanna know more!***

I am interested in the **Anarchist Federation** and would like more information.

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

Send to: AF - Hereford, c/o PO Box 7, Pontypool, Gwent, NP4 8YB